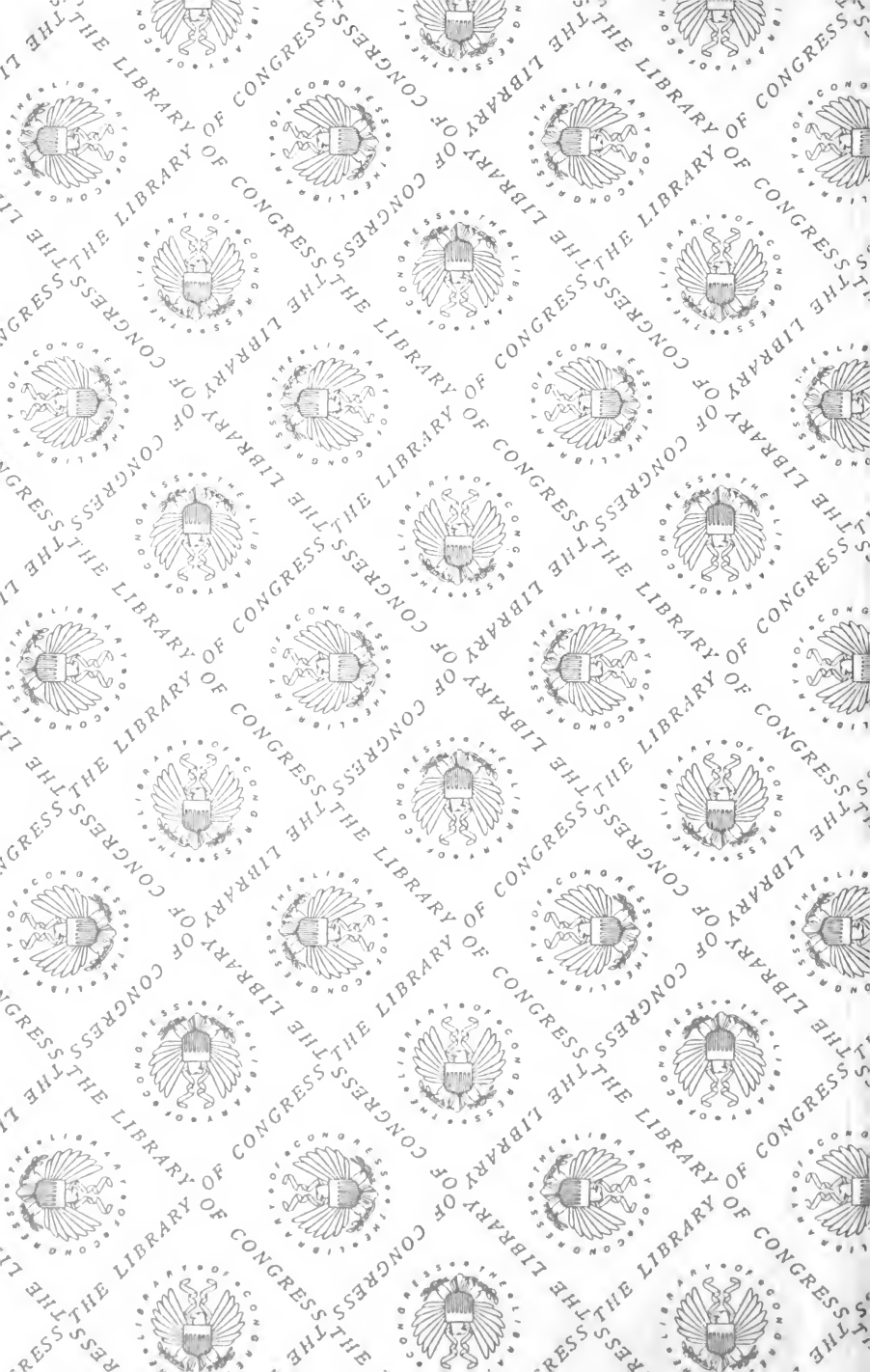
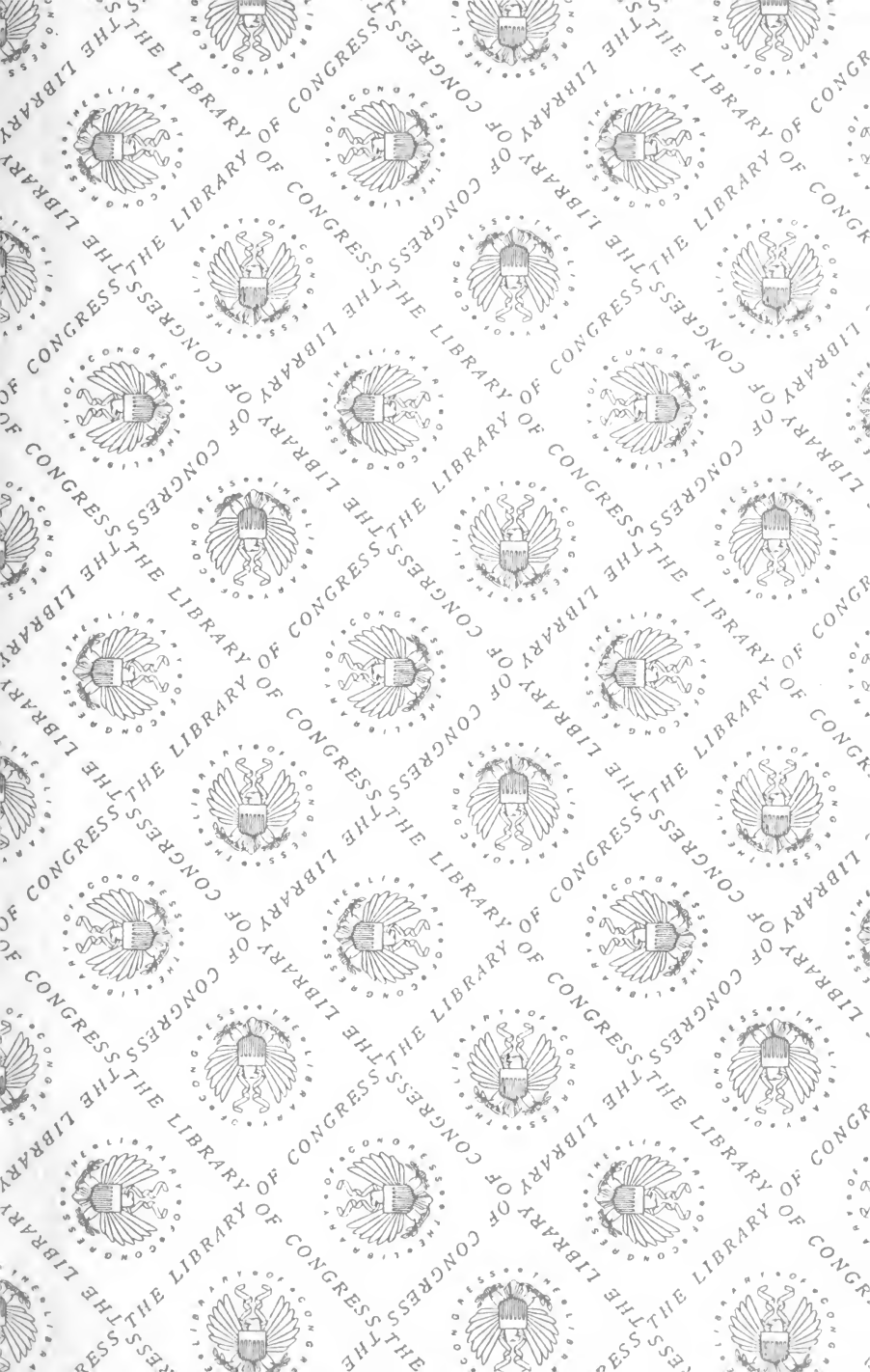


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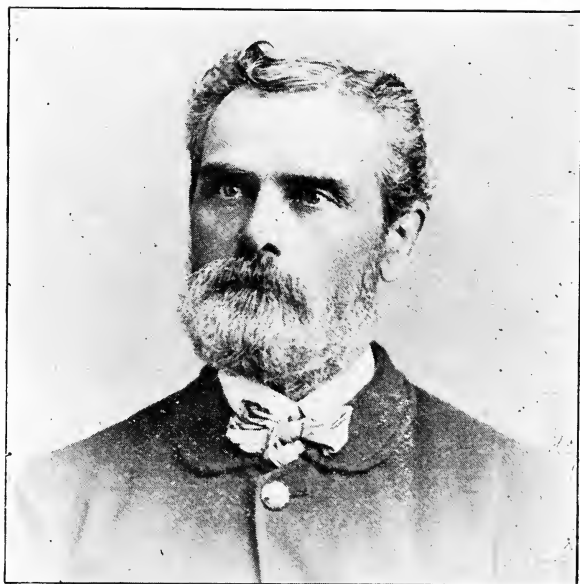
—FROM THE—

CAMP FIRE,

—AND—

OTHER POEMS.





Yours Truly,

Wm. D. Croyle.





SPARKS

FROM THE

CAMP FIRE

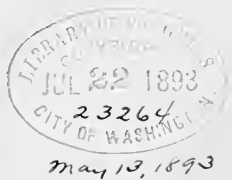
AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

DONALD D. CREYK.

1893



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BY DONALD D. CREYK,
Nat. Mil. Home, Va.

Respectfully inscribed
to the
Grand Army of the Republic
and
The Sons of Veterans
With sentiments of Fraternity
Charity and Loyalty.
By Don. D. Creyk,
Of Seward Post, Auburn, N. Y.



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SPARK I. Prelusive.

Time's with'ring hand upon the vet'ran's brow,
In furrowed lines its signal seal hath set;
And forms of vigor once possessed, are now
By palsied age and feebleness beset:
And faithful hearts inured to sad regret,
Attuned to catch the faintest trill of sound,
From vanished years which they can ne'er forget;
Still guard with reverent care each sacred mound'
Where sleep the brave and true, in Freedom's hal-
lowed ground.

On fertile plain, in many a valley fair,
Where balmy breezes woo the ripening grain;
War's thunders there once pealed 'mid lurid glare
And Freedom wept above her noble slain.
In mute appeal, a myriad graves remain,
O'er which recurring years have swiftly rolled:
And Spring with flow'ry tread oft came again,
And Summer's heat, and Winter's piercing cold;
While Autumn flung o'er all its rustling robe of
gold.

Although with ceaseless flow the cycling years,
On Time's fleet wing have to oblivion fled;
Remembrance lives to wake our griefs and fears,
Whene'er we seek communion with our dead,
Tho' pleasures brief before our gaze are spread,
The passing hour may future woes foretell,
When smiles will fade, and bitter tears be shed;
The heart oft loveth with the past to dwell,
And muse o'er vanished scenes 'neath Memorys,
mystic spell.

E'en as a flash from some lone beacon tower,
 Streams o'er the billows of the storm swept sea;
 Warning the vessel thro' the tempest's power,
 Of breakers wild upon her dangerous lee,
 So flashed Hope's cheering rays by Heaven's decree,
 When War's dark clouds obscured fair Freedom's
 light;—
 O'er those who fought with loyal constancy,
 Whose deeds heroic in defense of right
 Shone bright as stars in Heaven on the broad field
 of night.

Just Heaven forbid that fratricidal strife,
 Should e'er incarnadine our land again;
 That war's red hand should sap a nation's life,
 Piling the field with hecatombs of slain;
 But long as sunlight pours, or falls the rain,
 Clothing fair Nature's face with verdant pall,
 So long our sons shall loyal faith maintain,
 And fearless rallying at their country's call,
 Its honor vindicate, or for it nobly fall.

Fast fades the day, and evening shadows flit
 Athwart our paths, the sunset's rosy glow
 But for a space illumines, ere quenched its light
 In that dark ocean whose eternal flow
 Submerging life; doth still the living show,
 From past experience, how mankind may shun
 A heritage of misery and of woe;
 That which hath passed can never be undone,
 Tho' mightiest Empires fall, or Kingly thrones are
 won.

THE CAMP FIRE.

When on the air is borne the night-bird's call,
 And deepening shadows fast begin to fall;
 When noisy tumult of the day is ended,
 And peace and comfort in each home are blended;
 Thro' misty space the flickering phantoms steal,
 And countless weird fantastic forms reveal;
 With restless pace now, hither, thither, glance
 A myriad shapes which Fancy's eye entrance;
 Ethereal pictures, that the moonbeam weaves
 Beneath the umbrage of the rustling leaves;
 When by the night breeze swayed, these seem to sigh,
 Pervaded by some under thrill of mystery;
 And thoughts awake, that long perchance have lain
 Quiescent in the mind and busy brain;
 These ghostly phantoms which incessant flit,
 Oft seem to tell what we would fain forget;
 "Man's life, its pleasure, pain and sorrow,
 Shall fade like us before the coming morrow;
 And brief existence, spite of all ye deem,
 Prove but a breath, an evanescent dream."

Where gleams the Camp Fire that with vivid glow,
 Illumes a scene which only Comrades know;
 A wondrous charm the welcome guest allures,
 For one brief night his happiness assures;
 As Comrades there by weird enchantress led,
 Thro' echoing past re-wake the measured tread;
 From Time's fleet wing a single plume they borrow,
 And backward soar oblivious of the morrow.
 Tho' other evenings pleasantly are spent
 In joys domestic, gratified content,

In happy homes where smiling plenty reigns,
 And every wish a liberal response gains;
 Grief for a time no more their minds restrain,
 The past revives, they live it o'er again;
 Care flies abashed, no place for care is there,
 When kindred souls a mutual friendship share,
 And cordial warmth, with kind and courteous word,
 Attract and bind, by common impulse stirred;
 And closer draw,—by Fate's dark hand bereft
 Of comrades loved,—the weakened columns left.

II. MEMORIAL ODE.

Comrades, form your ranks again, for a fleeting year
 hath sped,
 Since last with welling eyes we held communion with
 our dead;
 Since with re-awakened mem'ries to which our hearts
 still cling,
 We decked each soldier's lowly grave with flowers of
 rosy Spring;
 And hearts with keen emotion throbbed as o'er the
 dewy tuft,
 Earth's fairest blossoms brightly flashed, like foam
 on ocean's surf.

With the onward march of time now, our ranks have
 thinner grown,
 We miss the clasp of loyal hands that from our midst
 have gone;
 And feet that once so tireless trod, do now all feeble
 seem,
 And eyes that once with ardor burned, show but a
 fading gleam;

But the veteran's heart beats bravely, as in the long
 ago,
 When in the serried ranks he stood, and braved his
 daring foe.

Again our banner proudly floats, while Peace, on
 silv'ry wing,
 With Heaven's approval consecrates the tributes
 which we bring;
 No cruel stain of war is here with its ensanguined
 hue
 To mar the daisy's modest grace, the violet's lovely
 blue;
 But the rose's perfumed treasures in freshest bloom
 are shed,
 To deck the graves where calmly sleep a nation's
 honored dead.

No rude sounds their slumbers wake,
 Where our Comrades rest in sleep;
 There no volleyed thunders break,
 Nor the cannon's light'nings leap;
 But the fragrant flowers in bloom,
 Light the verdure of the tomb;
 And the scarlet shafts of morn,
 With ruddy glow suffuse, each hallowed grave adorn.
 In the morning's shad'wy mist,
 We hear their voices calling,
 And a breath our brows hath kissed,
 When dews at eve were falling.

And the shadows of the past,
 'Neath mem'ry's potent spell,
 Have a mystic glamour cast,
 Where our Comrades silent dwell,

As we pray for those who fought,
 With their life blood freedom bought,
 That their Country still might be,
 Wher'er its banner waves, a land of liberty.
 The standard of their glory.

Let its starry folds proclaim;
 Their grand immortal story,
 And the lustre of their fame.

Other issues upon earth,
 Shall be sanctified by blood;
 Manhood, truth, and noble worth,
 Stem again the crimson flood.

But the gift our Comrades gave,
 Rare boon their brave endeavor
 Won on land, and ocean wave ;

This Heaven will bless, our Country guard forever.
 By the mem'ries we cherish,
 Of the years forever fled;
 Ne'er from our hearts shall perish,
 Loved remembrance of our dead.

There cherished mem'ries of the years gone by,
 His heart expands, bedim each comrade's eye;
 And kindling fancies bright'ning as they flow,
 The past renew mid scenes of long ago.
 Relentless war no more upon our land,
 Spreads death and carnage with a cruel hand;
 All o'er, the weary march, the field-fires' glow,
 The sudder sortie by the daring foe;
 The cannon's thunder on the deafened ear,
 The deadly charge, and the victorious cheer;
 Those crimsoned fields where battle's onset pressed,
 Are now in gayest robes by nature dressed;
 While balmy breeze, glad sun and vernal shower,
 The earth revive thro' many a smiling hour.

On time's fleet wing as changing seasons roll,
 We too must pass unto our destined goal;
 Tho' feeble grown with each successive year,
 The veteran's form, his martial step appear;
 Not so, when he with youth's aspiring zeal,
 Struck for his country, and a nation's weal;
 Flown now his summer skies, stern winter's tears,
 Enshrouding mem'ries of eventful years;
 With icy touch, his faltering steps pursue,
 Now chill the hearts that beat so brave and true.
 Nor when responsive to his country's call,
 He sprang to arms, for her relinquished all;
 When love, and hope, and many a noble life,
 Were crushed forever in the deadly strife.
 God can alone the eternal truth declare,
 Of lives eclipsed by death and anguish there

THE VETERAN.

His crippled frame, now like some stately tree
 The thunderbolt hath riven, shattered stands;
 And ill sustains the stern incessant strife,
 Life's struggle now demands.

With stealthy pace, the foe he oft has braved,
 Approacheth now, soon shall the silent shore,
 Where twilight fades to sombre night be won,
 His weary march be o'er.

In mem'ry still he views the tragic field,
 That once re-echoed to their eager tread;
 Where wrapped forever in eternal rest,
 Repose his comrade dead.

Oh ! weary years of fratricidal strife,
 Sad years of suffering, sacrifice of life:
 Not their's the anguish who in battle vied,
 And for a Nation's freedom nobly died;
 In blighted homes that o'er the land appear,
 The anguish there, there flowed the silent tear;
 Ah! who may tell the grief beyond control,
 Swept darkly o'er a loving mother's soul;
 Alas! e'en yet the tears unbidden flow,
 When to her mind recur those days of woe;
 High swelled a Nation's heart with joyous glee,
 For glorious deeds achieved on land and sea;
 But in her heart despairing passions raged,
 And former cares no more her time engaged ;
 The news that fired a nation's heart with joy,
 With gathered force, winged by the orphan's sigh ;
 In humble homes proved but the fatal knell
 Of love and hope that death alone could quell.
 Lo, complex marvels upon land and sea,
 Utter the voice of dread Infinity ;
 From snow-clad mountain peak, to tropic vale,
 The vital earth reiterates the tale ;
 His love attesting thro' each changing hour,
 Who guides an orb, or decks the humblest flower.

THE WILD-FLOWER.

Deep in the shadows of a woodland place,
 Where fairy fingers oft delight to trace
 The mazy windings of some magic spell,
 Thro' dusky groves, and phantom haunted dell ;
 The humble wild flower on earth's bosom lies,
 Breathing its fragrance neath the arching skies ;
 And, like a jewel hid in forest glade,
 Its sparkling hues flash o'er the woodland shade ;

The wanton wind the lovely gem perceives,
 And quaffs rich nectar from its blushing leaves ;
 Tho' other charms there in profusion lie,
 None please the sense, or so delight the eye,
 As that fair woodland flower, whose radiant bloom
 Diffuses brightness thro' the forest's gloom ;
 From mossy bed its tiny stem uprears,
 And every hour, more glorious still appears ;
 Kissed by the breeze, wooed by the balmy air,
 It lives and blooms a form of beauty there.

When through the void the dreadful tempest flies,
 And neath its fury, Nature prostrate lies ;
 Before its wrath the giant forest sways,
 In secret depth the lurid lightning plays ;
 The pendulous clouds 'neath angry sky distend,
 The earth o'erwhelming, with the tempest blend ;
 The stately trees bend earthward to the strain,
 And seem to moan as if with conscious pain ;
 While flying leaves in eddying clouds are driven,
 With vengeful fury neath the darkened Heaven ;
 Nor rest obtain before the ruthless blast,
 Till Nature smiles serene, and danger past.
 Upon the bosom of the angry deep,
 The tempest roars, and with majestic sweep,
 Churns the dark billows with infuriate ire,
 And added peril to its might inspire ;
 And yet, amid its sternest, wildest might,
 When curtained clouds e'en veil descending night ;
 When thro' the gloom resistless billows rave
 And not a ray illumines the crested wave ;
 Shapes ocean-born, as exquisite and fair
 As e'er shed fragrance on the balmy air ;

And fragile forms a touch, a breath destroy,
 The storm defy, the tempest's wrath enjoy.
 When calm succeeds the elemental strife,
 Prone on the wave, imbued with marv'ulous life;
 With pearly sail they float serene and free,
 Safe on the bosom of the shimmering sea.

Oh ! beauteous wild-flower, in the mighty storm.
 Where hid thy blossom, where thy slender form ?
 Upon the earth thy shrinking bloom lay pressed,
 Earth gave thee shelter, gave thee welcome rest ;
 While lofty trees fell prostrate to the ground,
 Thy dainty grace escaped without a wound ;
 Survived the tempest that the forest jarred,
 And blooms anew, its beauty all unmarred.
 Again the sun's swift-darting rays descend
 And countless blessings to glad earth portend.
 Once more with sweetest notes the woodlands ring,
 And rainbow hues are flitting on the wing ;
 While humble wild-flower from the mossy sod,
 Wafts grateful incense up to Nature's God

Still gleams the verdure 'neath the azure sky,
 O'er Nature's bosom fruitful seasons fly ;
 Still budding hours with fragrant incense tell,
 What odorous hues adorn each mossy dell ;
 With beauty rare the vernal landscape glows,
 The sheen of daisies, and the wild-wood rose ;
 Each grassy blade low-bending to the breeze,
 Each balmy breath that stirs the foliaged trees ;
 With vital import sorrowing hearts incline,
 To seek communion with a love divine.
 Shall He whose hand restrains the tempest's wrath,
 And guides the lightning on its fiery path,

Forget thee, mother, in thine hour of woe,
 Or fail his tender mercies to bestow ?
 If His Omniscience in wild-flower we see,
 Far more than flower, will He not care for thee ?
 Thro' darkest night the stars more vivid gleam,
 The foam-bells brightest on the troubled stream ;
 In love divine, God moves a nation's heart,
 Wings there His shaft, a sympathetic dart,
 Quick flies the impulse through a generous land,
 And heart to heart responds with liberal hand.

The wife bereaved and doomed to Grief's unrest,
 Struck by the blow that pierced her husband's breast ;
 With waking morn her widowed woe returns,
 In lonely desolation nightly mourns ;
 Maternal cares alone her hours employ,
 Her feelings centred in her dear one's joy ;
 Their varied needs no other can supply,
 Tho' generous hearts in charity may vie ;
 No one save her her loved ones fancies knows,
 Lives but for them, with love's devotion glows ;
 Within her fond embrace with soft caress,
 She checks their infant pleadings with a kiss ;
 Oft in their eyes, perchance recalls with pain,
 The loving glance she ne'er shall greet again ;
 No more a husband's care her mind will soothe,
 With tender voice, or whisper words of love ;
 No more with joy his voice will gaily ring,
 When prattling children to his knee shall cling ;
 As round the hearth at evening's peaceful close,
 Claspt to his heart he lulls them to repose ;
 As years elapse, in each expanding mind,
 A vague remembrance may his memory bind,
 Forever lessening, till its parting gleam
 Dies like a ripple on the murmuring stream.

She still, alas, must hide her aching heart,
 Oft feign to smile when welling tears will start ;
 Oh! what to her is vict'ry's proudest cheer,
 Bought with the blood of him she loved so dear ;
 Can nation's plaudits to her mind, restore
 Its former bliss, now fled for evermore ;
 Or all that triumph, glory gives, impart
 A gleam of comfort to that stricken heart ?

BEREAVED.

Oh ! weary days, and nights without relief,
 Alternate pass, like shadows, flit and fade ;
 Yet naught they bring to ease my weary grief,
 Or heal the wound death's cruel dart hath made.
 The storm-lit clouds, afar from ocean borne,
 With threatening mien, beneath the dark'ning sky,
 O'er cast the radiant hues by Nature worn ;
 The violet's bloom, the rose's gorgeous dye ;
 Upon the earth its gloomy mantle spread,
 It weaves a shroud by fragrant blossoms shed ;
 And day's bright beams, eclipsed by murky gloom,
 Fade into darkness 'neath its sable plume.

II

E'en so my heart beneath a cloud of woe,
 Throbs faintly now, for me no cheering ray
 Of blessed light, across my path doth show,
 To guide my falt'ring steps to joyful day.
 Alone in widowed grief, no more to see
 The form of him I loved, with tender pride ;
 Whose glance, whose touch, whose loving tones to me,
 Were dearer far than aught the earth beside.

Vanished for aye, my dream of bliss is o'er ;
 Like ocean's tide, which, ebbing from the shore,
 Leaves stranded there the wreck by billows strewn ;
 Joy from my life hath ebb'd, forever gone.

Within the precincts of a rural town,
 Remote from those of high pretensions known ;
 Yet not obscure, for fame with clarion tongue,
 Hath oft proclaimed, and bards its glory sung ;
 There each brief season of the changing year,
 The vet'ran's camp invites to social cheer ;
 Thro' misty past with retrospective eye,
 They once again eventful scenes descry ;
 Of deadly perils, dangers that befell,
 On fields ensanguined, many comrades tell ;
 In fancy hear war's angry tumult roar,
 Like sounding surges on a distant shore.
 Tho' small the town, heroes as great, sublime,
 As e'er shed lustre on the march of time ;
 There had their birth, whose names became
 The synonyms of highest, noblest fame ;
 Tho' poor its homes, each humble roof was blessed
 With bounteous store, by industry possessed ;
 Tho' many a town, and cities not a few,
 Its wealth surpassed, its numbers far outgrew ;
 No hearts more loyal to their country's cause,
 More fearless, readier to maintain its laws ;
 Or dare with truer courage, fortune's frown,
 Than those who dwelt in that fair rural town.
 Not with the affluent alone are found
 The virtues, which to honor most redound ;
 'Neath humble roof, oft from life's lowest station,
 Spring forth the hearts that save and guide a nation ;
 From low estate evolved, we constant see
 The grandest types of true nobility ;

While justice, truth, combined with high resolve,
 And life ennobling, deepest mysteries solve ;
 Are seen inscribed, not where earth's riches shower,
 But in the annals of the humble poor.

Through crowded streets; amid the gath'ring gloom,
 The comrades hasten to the cheerful room ;
 Friends who are met, are instantly impressed,
 For welcome warm awaits the stranger guest ;
 No truer hearts can stranger ever know,
 Than those who meet around the camp fire's glow.
 Night's shadows deepen, as they marching come
 In marshaled ranks, to sound of fife and drum ;
 And quickly ent'ring at the welcome door,
 Their ranks disperse around the spacious floor ;
 In groups they form, on social pleasure bent,
 And genial mirth prevails, and pleased content ;
 Around the walls their gladdened eyes behold
 The starry banners all their hues unfold ;
 Festooning records of man's high endeavor,
 Of deeds that live and shall endure forever ;
 With floral wreaths the lofty ceiling glows,
 Where garlands fair a myriad tints disclose.
 There relics too of many a thrilling scene,
 Recall their memories to what once had been ;
 Trophies of spoil, mayhap in battle won,
 The dented sabre, antiquated gun ;
 Old rusted bayonets, ramrods not a few,
 The old canteen, the blanket far from new ;
 Two handleless trimikins lay there in state,
 Flanked by a rimless army ration plate ;
 While high o'er all suspended from a rack,
 Gleamed like a star, a tattered haversack.

And now the hum of conversation swells
 As each in turn some past experience tells ;
 Till reason's barriers, which 'till then withstood,
 Give way before the long-impending flood ;
 And merry laughter through the halls resound,
 And jest, and song, and doubtful tale abound ;
 At times the wildest vagaries prevailed,
 Forts are besieged, and hostile ranks assailed ;
 Of Shiloh's field one vet expatiated,
 While others doubted, questioned, and debated ;
 On plans strategic, on positions won,
 On toilsome marches 'neath a scorching sun ;
 At length, in feats mendacious all engaged,
 And long and loud the wordy warfare raged.
 One comrade there of questionable fame,
 Where others praised, persistently would blame ;
 No General, regiment, battle great or small,
 But what he knew, in fact he knew it all ;
 Impeding those who tried in vain to speak,
 He bluffed them all with adamant cheek ;
 Until at length by stranger guest surveyed,
 Who listened long intent to what he said ;
 With eye askance, his features well he noted,
 And to expose all energies devoted ;
 When full convinced his mind the truth possessed,
 He turned, and thus the windy man addressed.
 "No more may we give credence to your story,
 Your deeds of emprise, and of martial glory ;
 Imposture plain is stamped upon your brow,
 I knew it long, all see it plainly now ;
 Your fabled stories told for many years,
 Have comrades startled, women bathed in tears ;
 Until at last, with other's eyes, you view
 Your glaring falsehoods, to believe them true ;

We know you served, but in befitting station,
 In peaceful camp you fought the army ration;
 But never saw, whate'er your merit won,
 An armed foe, or fired an angry gun;
 Your great achievements, daring deeds in kind,
 Were all performed within your fertile mind.
 No more your tongue in labyrinthic maze,
 Shall doubt inspire, or wonder, or amaze;
 Learn tho' your thoughts to fiction wild aspire,
 'Who hates a falsehood, must detest a liar.'
 In mute despair the braggart helpless gazed,
 And silently, oh marvel! stood amazed;
 Within his breast emotions keen contend,
 And changing hues upon his features blend;
 All vainly now his presence there deplores,
 Or fertile mind for subterfuge explores;
 He stood revealed, a thing of poor pretense,
 Suppressed without a word in self defense.
 Much cause have they that stranger guest to bless,
 A member lost, they gained a nuisance less.
 Oft spurious metals counterfeit pure gold,
 And wolves oft ravage many a guarded fold.

Lo, where two Solomons in judgment sit,
 Two comrades noted for astounding wit;
 Who having formed a self-appointed board,
 Determine all with wonderful accord;
 With shrewd discernment, the sagacious two,
 Sit, grin, and gaze, then gaze and grin anew;
 With solemn mien, their sapient minds digest
 All needful wisdom, they discard the rest;
 With stolid look, they smoke and talk, and ponder,
 How they may best excite admiring wonder;
 They criticise all conflicts, lost and won,
 From leader's skill to calibre of gun;

Momentous facts by these are sagely mooted,
 And those of lesser import merely noted.
 Shade of the mighty, has it come to this
 That all your deeds, your acts were done amiss;
 That your renown, your once illustrious name
 But bubble pricked, the butt of fickle fame?
 No more your genius, merit, thought, transcend,
 Dispelled like mist, they here ignobly end.
 "We've pondered much, on much deliberated,
 On salient points, on facts by history stated;
 And find, that Generals, leaders of distinction,
 Excelled alone in warfare of extinction;
 We judge, they practiced poor economy.
 Why should they fight, or even view an enemy?
 Or if, by chance, they stumbled on its lair,
 March back, march round, march anywhere but there;
 The gallant troops they led o'er hill and plain,
 Were sadly left, while they came home again;
 What they achieved is now but little matter,
 We feel, we know, we could have done much better;
 Have led in fact an army through the war,
 And marched it home without a single scar."

Think not we thus seek merit to enhance,
 Or proudly boast, alas! we had no chance;
 Now like some plant we oft regretful see,
 Expanding fruitless in sterility;
 The world perchance may yet be mortified,
 To learn our brains remain unfructified;
 Yet still for all its past remissness,
 We grant our country absolute forgiveness."

At last with pomp arrives the great event,
 O'er which in labor, weary hours were spent;
 When sounds the call by ready feet obeyed,
 As food abundant on the board is laid;

With glist'ning eyes, and somewhat anxious faces,
 All hasten now to occupy their places;
 Each grizzled vet'ran on his elbow leans,
 Fast rooted, gazing on the pork and beans;
 The Chaplain prays, soonest o'er the better,
 Then wakes the din, and loud convivial clatter;
 Their nimble hands in dish huge spoons insert,
 And trifling themes no more their minds divert;
 It seemed as if momentous issues hung,
 On active jaws, and busy, speechless tongue;
 No room for words in ample mouths distended,
 No time for speech until the conflict's ended.

Anticipation long had eager grown,
 To share the pleasures there profusely shown;
 While odorous incense from each smoking dish,
 Inspired the sense to appetizing relish;
 In tempting order on the board were laid,
 In varied guise, seductively displayed;
 The aid to which stern hunger oft appealed,
 So oft withheld, upon the tented field;
 Not viands rare, that wealthy palates clog,
 Impair the stomach, and the mind befog;
 But food in which a thousand virtues blend,
 In camp, on march, the one essential friend.
 Oh! what so grateful to the hungry wight,
 As to enjoy satiety's delight?
 Since Eve with Adam shared the tempting fruit,
 Of human misery, hunger is the root;
 Should doubting minds this subject e'er attract,
 Curtail supplies and demonstrate the fact.
 A well lined stomach courage doth impart,
 And food unstinted fires the timid heart;
 Where may be found more vivid illustrations,
 Than there 'mong those replete with army rations;

Each smiling Comrade, gratified and civil,
 Equipped internally to face the Devil.
 Time worketh many changes, yet remain,
 Some facts mankind immutably retain;
 One which to us makes life's endurance sweet,
 Who eats to live, must also live to eat.

But not alone do these assembled there,
 Within the confines of their Camp Fire's glare,
 Their ready sympathy and aid extend,
 And suffering worth with liberal gifts befriend;
 As far as man thro' habitable space,
 Can home secure, or fix a dwelling place;
 From ocean's verge, to wild Sierra's range,
 Live mutual ties, which bind but never change;
 Immortal bonds, that linking soul to soul,
 The firmer hold as fleeting seasons roll.
 In generous hearts the flower of friendship blooms,
 With vivid hues the darkest scene illumines;
 The weary soul, by grief and sorrow shaken,
 By sickness wasted, and by friends forsaken;
 Care-worn he falters on his joyless way,
 His labored path uncheered by pity's ray;
 His steps a guiding prescience safe directs.
 Thro' deepest gloom an unseen power protects;
 And grief dispels, till fired by hope anew,
 He welcome finds from Comrades leal and true;
 When kindly deed, and gentle words restore,
 To grateful peace the weary heart once more.

CAMP FIRE EXTINGUISHED.

Fast fade the shadows of the gloomy night,
 The scattered stars grow dim with lessening ray;
 Far in the East, suffused with rosy light,
 The gray dawn ushers in the coming day;
 And whisp'ring winds upon the mountains born,
 Proclaim the advent of another morn.

The earth awakes, upon its dewy breast,
 The quick'ning sun in radiant splendor falls;
 From grassy plain, to rugged mountain crest,
 Sweet nature's voice in echoing music calls,
 And hum of bee, the wild bird's matin song,
 Swell on the air the leafy groves among.

Quenched is the fire that late with radiant glow,
 Shed warmth and comfort o'er the social scene;
 And noiseless shadows flicker to and fro,
 Athwart the rooms where jovial mirth had been;
 Thro' gates of morning streaming, sunlight falls,
 Where silence reigns, within deserted halls.

'Tis past, and yet Time's footsteps seemed to linger,
 Stayed for a moment by fraternal ties;
 Heedless of Fate, that with portentous finger,
 Points onward where the misty future lies;
 To distant hour, when we again shall view
 The fire that's quenched, its glorious rays renew.

PART II.

THE DESERTED HOME.

On the lake's placid bosom the weird shadows lie,
 And sweet flowers by the margin in harmony vie
 With the musical flow of the murmuring wave,
 As the clear rippling waters their reedy beds lave;
 And the lilies bend low to the breezes that bring
 Over mountain and plain welcome tidings of spring;
 Where each fragrant bud opens to their life-giving kiss,
 As the wanton winds woo them in exquisite bliss;
 Bright as morn's sunny rays are the fancies that wake
 When the musing eye dwells on that beautiful lake.

Spreading out from its shores fertile meadows are
 seen,
 Where the teeming Earth swells 'neath a mantle of
 green;
 And the lake like a jewel, there peacefully lies,
 Girt by emerald verdure beneath the blue skies;
 Bright and fair are its waters thro' sunshine or
 showers,
 Where the dreaming mind revels in glad summer
 hours;
 Here, apart from the world's busy turmoil and strife,
 Amid earth's fairest gems to which Nature gives life;
 On an orchard-crowned height, that wide prospect
 commands,
 Mountain, valley and lake, there the old dwelling
 stands.

Happy years of the past, alas! vanished and fled,
 Tho' time's impress remains, tis the seal of the dead;
 From thy chambers and hearth, joy and gladness
 have flown,

All thy crumbling walls stand now deserted and lone;
 And the wrathful wind smiles on its boisterous way,
 Both roof-tree and lintel fast mold'ring away;
 From oblivion's dark shade which thy glory o'ercast,
 Comes a voice as of wailing, a voice from the past;
 Calling back the fond mem'ries afloat on times stream
 All beauteous and fair as a summer night's dream.

When the spot which is now seen deserted and lone
 Mid the fair blooming landscape once gracefully
 shone;

There the loving heart mirrored in pleasure and joy
 All the, Soul's pure emotions which time could
 not cloy;

Lusty manhood surrounded by plenty was seen,
 And the aged in comfort passed onward serene;
 Youthful grace and rare beauty, a thousand fold
 blessed,

Here with blushing emotion true love oft confessed;
 And those tender enjoyments which kindred souls
 share,

Shed contentment and peace on the old dwelling,
 there.

Hark! the bugle call sounds on the clear morning air
 And responsive notes answer the call everywhere;
 Tis' the peal that now summons a nation to strife,
 Tis' the war-cry of freedom to battle for life;
 Bloody fields shall be lost, many conquests be won,
 Ere the sword shall be sheathed, ere the conflict
 be done;

For the blood of a nation for liberty shed,
 Hath aroused a dark vengeance where victors shall
 tread,
 Till their banner victorious o'er mountain and plain
 Proudly floats o'er a country united again.

Of that brave host who rallied for freedom and God,
 Of the thousands who crimsoned the verdure-clad sod;
 None more gallant sprang forth in their country's
 dark woe,
 Ever followed its banner, or charged on the foe;
 Than the true hearts who dwelt on that orchard
 crowned height.
 Where the old home is shrouded in ruin's dark night
 Familiar scenes still many memories recall
 Of the brave who for country left loved ones and all;
 But afar in the Southland where murm'ring pines,
 wave,
 Husband, father, and sons fill a patriot's grave.

There were breaking hearts here, who in bitterness
 mourned,
 Dreaming ever of dear ones who never returned;
 Days and weeks merged in months thro' the swift
 rolling year,
 But no soothing balm brought to allay their dread
 fear;
 Till their hearts throbbed with anguish when heard
 the sad tale
 Of a nation in mourning its dead to bewail.
 Like the rose gleam that flushes the tall mountain's
 crest,
 When at day's gentle close the sun sinks in the
 west,

Cherished hope in their souls for a moment flashed
 bright,
 Then its torch quenched for aye in despondency's
 night

In its exquisite beauty the gay landscape charms,
 And affection no longer dreads war's stern alarms;
 In the rich fertile valley, the golden-hued grain
 Often woos the glad sunshine, nor woos it in vain;
 While the lark soaring high in the blue vault above,
 The list'ning ear raptures with sweet strains of love;
 Still the lake flashes bright where the soft zephyrs fly,
 Nature's smile still reflects 'neath the clear azure sky;
 But from orchard-crowned heights comes a wail of
 despair,
 O'er bright hopes that lay crushed in the old Ruin
 there.

THE UNKNOWN UNION DEAD.

At sunset's close, beneath a shelter rude,
 Wayworn and faint, a dying vet'ran lay;
 And there unaided and in solitude,
 His last breath ebb'd away.
 All nature slept, no sound the stillness broke,
 Save feeble moan, or dripping dew drops shed
 By quiv'ring leaves; the midnight breeze awoke,
 And fanned the silent dead.

The morn' arose, and beams of radiant light
 Stole from the Heavens to kiss the cold still
 face,
 Which seemed transfigured there unto the sight
 Showing of grief no trace.

Upon the sward his lifeless body lay,
 With face upturned beneath the morning sky;
 While earth awoke to greet the new-born day,
 With blithesome harmony.

And much they marveled, who assembled there,
 Looking for that which might the mist'ry clear;
 Perchance some gift a faithful heart might wear,
 Of love or friendship dear.

At last they found concealed, in clenched grasp,
 A loyal emblem which his story told;
 When all unloosed from rigid fingers' clasp,
 Appeared a badge of gold.

With tearful gaze its legend thus they read,
 In graven characters displayed thereon;
 "By country granted for heroic deed,
 And honor nobly won."

And where his home? His errant steps where bound?
 Forever hushed the voice that could reply;
 They only knew who stood in sorrow round,
 He'd wandered there to die.

No friendly voice to soothe his parting grief,
 No hand to aid that might some comfort lend
 Till heaven in mercy sent a bless'd relief,
 Death proved his only friend.

The brave with courage meet their doom; nor seek,
 With unavailing tears, Death's grasp to shun;
 The craven dies with loud despairing shriek,
 A thousand deaths in one.

His lifeless form by gentle hands upborne,
 Draped with the starry flag he loved so well;
 They laid to silent rest at early morn,
 To peal of village bell.

From flow'ry spray the feathered warblers sang,
 From shrub and tree with freshest green o'er-
 spread;
 And loud and clear their morning carols rang,
 Sweet requiem for the dead.

And there he sleeps, where springtide blossoms wave.
 In fragrant beauty o'er his lonely bed;
 While simple stone records on nameless grave,
 The Unknown Union Dead.

DECORATION DAY, AUBURN N. Y.

Fair is the promise of the flow'ry May,
 And sweet the fragrance which its blossoms bring
 By soft winds fanned through many a leafy way
 Enwreathed by treasures of the balmy spring.
 When Nature's form in brightest robes arrayed,
 Gleams forth responsive to each vernal shower,
 And bird and flow'ret 'neath the verdant shade,
 With song and incense greet the passing hour.

When the rosy gleam of the early morn
 Has kindled the blush on the rose's breast,
 When the wild bird's song on the air is borne,
 As he soars aloft o'er his dewy nest,
 From his camp fire's glow shall the veteran come,
 And with glist'ning eye which the teardrops lave,
 Breathe a soldier's prayer though his voice be dumb
 While he decks with flowers each comrade's grave.

Bring loving gifts, weave rosy garlands here,
 Let fairest blossoms on these graves be shed
 Where lay our comrades true; a nation's dead,
 Whose cherished mem'ry we shall long revere,
 Their gallant deeds through future years shall be
 A Nation's pride, have they not nobly won
 High meed of glory when their work was done,
 Shedding their life blood that we might be free?
 With hallowed thoughts our hearts today o'erflow,
 Waking remembrance of our dead below
 Sacred and pure, lo! with resistless sweep,
 Where mighty torrents seek the boundless deep
 With onward flow the turbid waters leap,
 Which gush from virgin fount pure as the spotless
 snow.

FORT WAGNER.

Since the close of the Rebellion the ocean tides have encroached upon Morris Island, S. C. to such an extent as to entirely submerge the former site of Fort Wagner.

'Twas midnight on the silent deep,
 The moon with golden lustre beamed
 On wave sunk low in sullen sleep
 And o'er its surface brightly gleamed.
 A boding silence seemed to rest
 Upon the ocean's glittering crest;
 No sound there broke the stillness save
 Where'er the dark foam crested wave,
 Rolling in vast unbroken reach,
 Brake with low moan upon the beach,—
 The sandy beach which stretched away
 To where Fort Wagner grimly lay.

Upon the bosom of the bay
 On flowing tides the moonbeams glowed,
 Where stately ships at anchor lay
 Or gently at their moorings rode.
 The lofty Frigate rose and fell,
 Responsive to the ocean's swell;
 The iron victors of the deep
 Quiescent lay as if in sleep,
 Portentous silence! ere they broke
 In vengeful fury, sulphurous smoke,
 With every cannon trained to bear
 On the defiant Fortress there.

Then loud upon the morning air the sudden signals
 broke,
 And starting from their slumbers deep, the earth and
 sea awoke;
 Upon the breeze from ocean borne a stifling vapor
 hung,
 As cannon answered cannon with loud thunder-
 throated tongue;
 While through the Fleet the signal ran, "Make ready
 for the fray,
 Our forces on the Island beach storm Wagner's Fort
 to-day!"
 Then peal on peal with deafening roar, resounded
 far and wide,
 As fifty ships upon the main with lightning flash
 replied;
 And circling round in mazy sweep, like hawk o'er
 hapless dove,
 Each iron turret closer still to gain new station
 strove;

The "IRONSIDES" far in the van, did there her broad-
sides pour,
While near and far the shuddering earth rebellowed
to her roar.

No sound was heard on Wagner's slope, no answer-
ing cannon gave
Back lightning flash and quick response, all silent
as the grave;
So deathly still the Fortress seemed, their foes might
well believe
No gallant hearts were there within their onset to
receive;
The firing from the Fleet had ceased, and with the
dawn of day
Four thousand men upon the Fort advanced in close
array;
Like ghostly phantoms in the dawn they marched
with muffled tread,
Enshrouded by the morning mist, the grey dawn
overhead:
No harsh voice on the stillness broke as on with
bated breath
That column moved unto its doom,—a carnival of
death,
One moment forming 'neath the slope, then on with
deafening cheer;
"Charge for the Guns!" the order rang, in accents
loud and clear.

Not quicker doth the arrowy flame beneath the wel-
kin blue
Dazzle the eye with brilliant flash, then disappear
from view,

Than leaped the tongue of sheeted flame from each
 dark embrasure,
 As shell upon its mission sped with fatal aim and
 sure;
 The mountain torrent seaward to the ocean rushes
 on,
 The stream of life flows onward till the goal of
 death is won.
 With hopeful courage in their hearts they fought for
 glory there,
 And found—the hour which comes to all upon them
 with despair.
 By deadly grape their ranks were torn, shot did
 their column thin,
 The whizzing bullets' fatal thud increased the
 battle's din;
 Yet bravely there they fought until, with fruitless
 effort spent,
 Their vanquished ranks upon the ground in gory
 mass were blent.

Four thousand men had stormed the Fort whose
 hearts with ardor burned,—
 When evening's shadows closed the scene, six hun-
 dred back returned;
 A remnant small surrendering, were saved from fur-
 ther feud,—
 The rest laid there on Wagner's slope dyed crimson
 with their blood.
 Within the trenches, on the crest, strewn o'er the
 burning sand,
 Thick as autumnal leaves they lay, dead, dying on
 the strand;

The rosy flush of early dawn which pierced the fading gloom,
 Before the sun his radiance shed, there lit them to their doom;
 And still the guns upon the Fort in loud defiance roared,
 And still the hissing shot and shell upon the hot sand poured—
 With unrelenting fury fell, until the sinking sun
 Far in the West with blood-red disk, proclaimed the battle won.

By many a Northern fireside, by mountain and by stream,
 Where daisies sweet and violets 'mid emerald verdure gleam;
 Where the orchard's fruited boughs all their golden wealth unfold,
 Is Wagner's siege remembered still, the bloody story told;
 A Nation mourned in anguish for the precious blood there shed,
 By sacred hearths in loving homes bewailed its honored dead;
 Death came to them with honor there. What could they more than give
 Their life-blood for the Union, that a Nation grand might live?
 That the load-star of the world might in grander beauty shine,
 The home of Freedom evermore, unparelled, divine,
 Not all in vain ye bravely fell; avengers marching on
 Sheathed not their swords in amity till Freedom's cause they won.

Where Wagner once defiant stood, the eye may search
in vain;
Of parapet, or embrasure, no vestige doth remain,
No more upon that tragic slope, shall hostile ranks
engage,
Around its dark and frowning crest the deadly struggle
rage;
Where once the din of battle raged, now silence
reigns supreme,
All, all is changed save burning sands beneath the
sun's red gleam.
If Wagner's site ye now would find, seek where the
waters lave,
The silent and deserted strand, submerged beneath
the wave;
The crested billows from the deep, resistless in their
might,
Roll over Wagner's watery grave concealed from
human sight:
With deafening shock upon the strand, the foam-
fringed breakers roar,
Proclaiming in loud thunder tones, FORT WAGNER IS
NO MORE.

SUMTER.

The grateful breeze blows softly o'er the bay,
 The waves break gently on the silent shore,
 Or, where the hidden reefs in ambush lay,
 Proclaim the danger with tumultuous roar.
 High in the Heavens, the screaming wild gulls soar;
 Wheeling aloft on strong untiring wing,
 As if all flight from land they now forbore;
 While swelling tides, a bounty rendering
 From out the yeasty depths, their prey from Ocean
 bring.

The breeze now freshens, and with flowing sheet,
 Before the wind our boat more swiftly flies;
 The city fair, with parting gaze we greet,
 Then eager scan the rolling waste, which lies
 Far sea ward; there wide Ocean, with the skies
 Commingling, the raptured eye doth meet
 With awe-inspiring majesty; nor dies
 Its image on the mind, fading and fleet,
 But lives within our hearts, a recollection sweet.

Stronger the breeze; and we more swiftly fly
 Across the bounding wave with snowy wing;
 All vainly now the heaving billows try,
 To speedy wreck, our gallant craft to bring;
 She, quickly from each shock recovering,
 Inspires all hearts with animation's glow.
 In blithesome mood there, we together sing,
 As speeding fast, upon our course we go;
 Swift as an arrow's flight, when shot from bended
 bow.

The breeze expanding, swells into a gale;
 No longer now may we still vainly try
 Our course to hold, albeit with shortened sail
 Before the gale the white—maned coursers fly,
 Each following each in furious rivalry,
 With yeasty foam, the waves in maddening glee,
 Bestrew the wind beneath an angry sky;
 Safety nor comfort, may we hope to see,
 Until we reach a haven, on Sumter's rocky lee.
 Hard at the labored oars, with zeal we ply,
 And freshened impulse gives our boat to feel;
 Which, climbing o'er the crested surges high,
 Now hard to Starboard, now to Port, doth heel,
 Cleaving the billows with her speedy keel;
 And o'er the raging deep, mid deafening roar,
 Our course against the tempest's might compel;
 Unti', all danger past, numbed, faint and sore,
 We find a refuge safe, on Sumter's rocky shore.

Cheerless and grim, the gloomy fortress stands,
 And entrance to the broad-armed bay commands.
 Within the limits of her rocky isle,
 Nor tree is found, nor floral beauty's smile,
 Nor aught, which might through wearied eyes impart,
 A sense of grateful pleasure to the heart;
 Not the lone desert, though ye searched it o'er,
 Could spot supply more barren than its shore:

The rolling wave, fast from the sounding main,
 In murmuring cadence, with a sweet refrain,
 Here, gently breaking on the shore is seen,
 O'er darkened ledge, with mimic bays between:
 Alas! for vanished glory, and for fame,
 Ambitions's goal, and proud historic name;
 That torch which once illumed thy glorious past,
 And bright effulgence o'er thy grandeur cast;

Could naught avail to rescue from its doom,
 Ere quenched forever in oblivion's gloom,
 With all that fame, and all that honor gave,
 Submerged for aye beneath Time's reflux wave?

Deserted Fort! ignoble change! since, when
 Thy frowning walls were manned by gallant men;
 When fiery bolts, in vengeance here were hurled,
 By hostile ranks, neath starry flag unfurled,
 And fleet on fleet, up from the azure main,
 With shot and shell, these ramparts stormed in vain;
 When cruel War, with horrid front appeared,
 And fell destruction in its train appeared,
 Avails not now, the mournful story tell,
 How gallant hearts within these ramparts fell;
 Enough to know, as years roll swiftly by,
 Although in dust their honored ashes lie,
 O'er the proud tombs which loving hearts have raised,
 Their names recorded, and their valor praised;
 That former foes unite to wreath the bay,
 To deck the graves of those who wore the grey;
 While Northern hearts, knit by fraternal tie,
 Responsive throb in tender sympathy.

The storm hath passed, yet o'er the restless deep,
 Dark-heaving still, the waters foam and leap
 With unabated anger; and the roar
 Of sounding surf on the opposing shore,
 And white-capped breakers, which the Tempest's
 might

Oft lashed to fury in the stormy night;—
 Speak in loud tones of danger yet to be,
 Ere all is hushed in sweet tranquility.
 And now, the glowing orb of parting day,
 In bright effulgence, gilds both Fort and Bay,

With sparkling lustre o'er the rampart wall,
 The golden shafts in radiant splendor fall;
 All bathed one moment in a flood of light,
 Which fading, dies before approaching night.

The evening shadows now begin to fall,
 By lonely shore, and ruined Fortress wall,
 The rising moon with silvery lustre beams,
 The Pharo's flash wide o'er the waters gleams:
 Imagination now, with Fancy's eye,
 Weird forms perceive which flit incessant by,
 Vivid, distinct, though murky gloom o'erspread
 The ghosts of buried years, the sheeted dead;
 Hears once again the war-cry on the breeze,
 The cannon's roar, loud thundering o'er the seas;
 Once more, the deadly hail begins to fall,
 And dying comrades unto comrades call;
 The stately War-ship at its mooring rides,
 And belches fury from its iron sides;
 Death stamps his foot, and rides upon the breeze
 Past marshalled armies, and o'er angry seas;
 And Nation's bravest, on ensanguined plain,
 Are by ambition sacrificed in vain.

The spectral visions of my fancy fade,
 Like flitting sunbeams in the woodland shade;
 Peaceful and calm, beneath a midnight sky,
 The moon's pale rays upon the waters lie;
 The rippling tide, like molten silver flows,
 While Earth in dreamy slumber seeks repose.
 No more war's echoes, in the dewy morn
 Resound on shore, are o'er the waters borne,
 No menace now in proud defiance hurled:
 Salutes the dawn with hostile flag unfurled;

But peaceful commerce o'er the water glides,
 And fisher's boat at anchor safely rides;
 Where war once ruled, now smiling peace invades,
 And Nature's bounty everywhere pervades.

DECORATION DAY, MAY 30, 93.

I.

Life, Love, and Death, these, ca·il as we may,
 Comprise the essence of creation's plans;
 The earthly province, destiny of man,
 And moving things that breathe but for a day,
 In proper spheres, Eternal laws obey.
 Life links with Death, and since the world began
 In dark Oblivion ends its little span,
 But Love supernal leads to endless day.
 Life links with death, and still to life we cling,
 As though Death were not, ever drawing near;
 Until at last, touched by its icy spear,
 The tired heart sleeps, no more to borrow
 The vital strength to brave the coming morrow,
 And dare the ills a ruthless fate might bring.

OUR DEAD BUT SLEEP.

II.

'Neath vernal skies, the latter May hath spread
 Her verdant couch, lit by the fragrant glow
 Of gems the fairest Nature could bestow;
 Wooed by the breeze, by rain and sunshine fed,
 With spring-tide bloom recurs the martial tread,

In measured cadence as in years ago;
 To-day a Nation's heart beats soft and low
 Around the hallowed precincts of its dead,
 Long quenched the bivouac fire, the wild refrain
 Of battle-bugle stilled; the clang of arms
 That stirred our hearts so oft with stern alarms,
 Is heard no more, enwrapped in dreamless sleep,
 While quivering leaves above them vigils keep,
 They rest,—when trump shall sound,—to wake again.

FREDERICKSBURG.

Portentous heights, how calm and still,
 Where vivid verdure crowns each hill,
 And nature's jocund voices fill
 The air with pleasing symphony.

Still tow'ring there, as when of yore,
 Your thund'ring sides defiance bore,
 And shrieking shell re'entless tore
 A crimsoned path of agony.

What time against thy flaming breast,
 The sons of freedom boldly prest,
 To plant upon thy frowning crest,
 Their glorious flag of liberty.

Pressed upward till, with effort spent,
 Their ranks a thousand cannon rent;
 While fires of hell with slaughter blent,
 Gave thee a gory victory.

Still darkly flows the sullen tide,
 Which laves thy rugged mountain side,
 Whose rippling waves once scarlet dyed,
 Glide seaward to obscurity.

Not all the heaven sent moisture shed,
 Nor verdant bloom beneath the tread,
 Can that dark stain from lowly bed,
 Efface through time's futurity.

DECORATION DAY.

Of days throughout the fleeting year, Decoration Day appeals more directly than any other to the deepest sympathies, the warmest emotions of our nature.

On that day, the purest sentiments prevail, and hearts grow warm with the inspiration of the occasion, as fully realizing its solemnity, we recall to memory beloved ones to whom silence came, and their ears closed forever to all earthly sounds.

"When wrapped in silver white from head to feet,
With outstretched hands and smiling, Death stood there."

With the advent of that day are awakened recollections, and tender aspirations, fraught with a significance which we keenly feel, yet vainly attempt to express. It embraces within its scope, the past, the present and the future. The kind and indulgent father, the devoted and affectionate mother, stand on that day with bowed head, and clasped hands, fondly recalling happy reminiscences of days gone by; and with retrospective eye, see flitting before their mental vision from out the shadowy past the dearly remembered forms of loved ones who have passed away.

And although the once busy hands are stilled, the loving voices forever mute; yet dear, inexpressibly dear to surviving friends, is the knowledge that theirs is still the happy privilege of repairing to the spot where the ashes of their dear ones lay, to consecrate to their memories with hallowed devotion, a tribute of undying love.

What observance is more beautiful, more touchingly eloquent, than that of decking the tomb with fragrant garlands of "Rosy Spring?" What more gratefully welcome to the contemplative mind, the constant heart, than to snatch, though but for a few brief hours, some respite from the wearying clamor of incessant toil, for the purpose of commemorating the virtues, the loyalty of those whom we constantly hold in affectionate remembrance. Then every voice breathes tenderness, and every tone affection, while the breezes that fan each foliaged bough and verdant slope, are burdened with the fragrance of blossomed flowers, and a mellowed radiance appears to be reflec

ted by nature on the heart of the beholder.

With the dead is associated the memory of their lives. We decorate the graves with flowers, which however fragrant and beautiful, are also symbolical of the impermanence of life, while the grave itself is but the connecting link of Earth with Eternity.

But if Decoration Day is endeared to the Nation at large, it is especially so to the surviving members of the Grand Army of the Republic; as, by the Grand Army and sympathizing friends, the day was originally set apart and devoted to the observance of the ceremonies which now obtain; its purpose to keep alive the memory of departed comrades, and to hold in grateful remembrance their gallant achievements.

They are not forgotten who sprang forth responsive to their Country's call, and who, in behalf of the highest interests of humanity followed their standard with unswerving loyalty until the glorious consummation of their efforts was attained, in the reunion of a disrupted and divided nation. Their deeds are inscribed on the roll of a Nation's history in characters of eternal light; while the memory of their patriotism and valor will be revered and cherished so long as the freedom which they so nobly vindicated shall continue to brighten and cheer with celestial ray, the hopes and aspirations of humanity. Upon a grateful posterity devolves the sacred obligation of emulating the heroism of their fathers, and keeping their memories green.

Duty, Love, and Honor combine to incite the living to the sacred observances of the occasion, while from the mysterious depths of the tomb, a voice whispers to our hearts the solemn mandate, "Remember the dead, irrespective of party, class, color, or creed."

Humanity's noblest and purest instincts will be more fully displayed; the God given attributes of sympathy and love will bind a Nation in closer fellowship, and kindred ties will be strengthened, when in recognition of a common heritage of grief, we give expression to the holiest sentiments of our nature, by the graves of our silent dead.

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